REMARKS

In the Office Action mailed January 30, 2004, the Examiner noted that claims 1-14 were pending, objected to claims 2, 3, 5 and 6 and rejected claims 1, 4 and 7-14. Claims 1, 2, 4, 5, and 7-14 have been amended, new claim 15 has been added and, thus, in view of the forgoing claims 1-15 remain pending for reconsideration which is requested. No new matter has been added. The Examiner's rejections are traversed below.

In the Office Action the Examiner objected to claims 2, 3, 5 and 6 and indicated that these claims would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. These claims have been so rewritten and it is submitted that these claims have not been narrowed and have the same scope as prior to being made independent and are now allowable. Withdrawal of the objection is requested.

On page 2 of the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 1, 4 and 7-13 under 35 U.S.C. section 102 as anticipated by Nakagaki. Page 5 of the Office Action reject claim 14 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 over Nakagaki and Oku.

Nakagaki is directed to a system that distributes storage of process information over various systems. As stated in Nakagaki:

> It is an object of the invention to provide an information processing method and an information processing system for recording information concerning distribution when information is distributed, thereby enabling a route of the information to be traced later and different information to be sent later to persons getting that information.

(See Nakagaki col. 3, lines 54-59)

Because Nakagaki distributes the information and a system receiving the process information can further distribute the process information, to find the information it must be traced. As stated by Nakagaki:

> When an instruction for tracing the distribution route of the information X is given in the information intervention system A, the distribution history of the information X is fetched from the distribution history holding section 15 of the information intervention system A and the information intervention system B to which the information X was distributed is instructed to trace the distribution route of the information X. Upon reception of the instruction for tracing the distribution route of the information X from the information intervention system A, the information intervention system B fetches the distribution history of the information X from its distribution history holding section 15 and instructs the information intervention systems C and D to which the information X was distributed to trace the distribution route of the information X. The information intervention systems C and D, which do not hold the distribution history of the information X, return a message to the effect that the distribution history related to the information X does not exist to the information intervention system A. The information intervention system B returns the distribution histories recorded when the information X was distributed to the information intervention systems C and D to the information intervention system A, whereby the information intervention

system A can know that the information X was distributed as shown in FIG. 4.
Thus, the information intervention system A can analyze the distribution route,
distribution range, etc., of the information X.

(See Nakagaki, col. 11, line 63 - col. 12, line 21)

The present invention recognizes this tracking or tracing problem:

> Since history information must be stored in data, a process history stored in data
> to be tracked must be confirmed when a process history is tracked. In this case, if
> data distributed among a plurality of systems are tracked, each system must be
> accessed and a process history stored in data must be confirmed. Therefore, a
> communications process becomes complex and it cannot necessarily be said to
> be a general method.

(See Application, page 2, line 2 - page 3, line 3)

The Examiner acknowledges that Nakagaki is directed to a distributed storage system where

the different systems "share" their information (see Action, page 7).

The present invention solves the Nakagaki tracking or tracing problem by centralizing the

storage of the history information ("recording the process information of the specific system in a

centralized shared storage ... that collectively and centrally stores ... process information" - claim

1).

The Examiner cites Oku for it's alleged teachings of a business transaction. Oku does

not teach or suggest anything about centralized storage of transaction process history of each

business transaction.

It is submitted that the invention of the independent claims distinguishes over the prior art

and withdrawal of the rejection is requested.

New claim 15 emphasizes the storage of business traction histories in a centralized

storage there by allowing the different system involved to track the histories more easily than the

prior art. Nothing in the prior art teaches or suggests such. It is submitted that the new claim

distinguishes over the prior art.

It is submitted that claims 2, 3, 5 and 6 continue to be allowable. It is further submitted

that the claims are not taught, disclosed or suggested by the prior art. The claims are therefore

in a condition suitable for allowance. An early Notice of Allowance is requested.

If any further fees, other than and except for the issue fee, are necessary with respect to this paper, the U.S.P.T.O. is requested to obtain the same from deposit account number 19-3935.

Respectfully submitted,

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